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ENGLISH

APPROVAL OF UNDP ASSISTANCE TO A PROJECT OF AFGHANISTAN

IPF: (1992-96) $70 039 000

(AFG/90/007) - Rural Rehabilitation in Northern, Western and Central Afghanistan (Supplementary Assistance)

Date of approval by the AC:[1]	12 August 1992	
Expected duration:	Three years	
Lead Government Authority:	Ministry of Planning	
Proposed executing agency:	UNDP/OPS	
Implementing Agent:	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development	
Proposed UNDP contribution:	$6 302 000	Source of funds: IPF
Previous UNDP budget:	$3 452 500	
Total UNDP budget:	$9 754 500	

Project background

With new political developments in Afghanistan and the establishment in May 1992 of the Interim Government of the Islamic State of Afghanistan (GISA), there is the hope that the country will begin returning to normal. Afghan refugees in Pakistan and Iran, which numbered over five million, have responded favourably to these events, and since May 1992, have been returning to their homeland at an average rate of 12,000 per day. Despite increased optimism, the problems facing returning refugees and all Afghans in rural areas are enormous. The above-mentioned project had its origins in the UNDP Provincial Strategy of 1990 which guided projects towards moving into rural areas, as opportunities arose, through a platform approach whereby personnel and resources would be available in-country. The project was intended to provide a platform from which UNDP community-based activities could be launched in northern Afghanistan.

Under the Preparatory Assistance phase of the project, an operational office has been established in Mazar-i-Sharif and 3 international staff, 12 national professionals, 9 UN Volunteers, and 7 support staff recruited. Approximately 13 subcontracts to NGOs and local communities with a total value of $750,000 have been implemented and, as a consequence, 120 community-based crop extensionists trained; 500,000 hectares of crop land treated against sunn pest and locust infestation; 83 km of rural roads repaired; 20 village water tanks constructed and 168 km of irrigation canals desilted. The experience gained has been utilized in the preparation of the project document and its implementation strategy.

[1] This Fact Sheet reflects the status of the project/revision at the time it was approved by the Action Committee; modifications to the project/revision may have occurred subsequently.

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The destructive impact of 14 years of civil war on the rural economy is very evident in the country's northern, central and western provinces. This region is primarily rural and semi-arid. The mainstay of its economy is subsistence-level farming, with wheat the main crop and livestock a major economic activity. Other income generating activities include processing of seed oils, trade, transportation, cottage industries and services. Remittances from overseas also constitute a substantial underpinning for the economy.

Description of project

The development objective of the project is to rehabilitate rural infrastructure in order to improve the quality of life for the resident rural population and create conditions required for the return and resettlement of refugees and displaced persons by raising agricultural output and productivity, rehabilitating infrastructure, and providing economic and social services.

The scope of the project is being extended to cover the 15 northern, western and central provinces of the country, with its main office to be relocated to Kabul to facilitate interaction with the Government. The technical unit will continue in Mazar-i-Sharif, with sub-units to be established in Herat and Pul-i-Khumri, covering seven technical zones. The project will complement activities under the project (AFG/88/001) Rural Rehabilitation in Southern and Eastern Afghanistan. Through a mix of direct implementation and sub-contracts with locally-based technical implementing groups, the project will provide technical and financial assistance to rural communities in two sectors: irrigation and drinking water supply, and rural sanitation. Repair of the roads leading to project sites will be undertaken as needed; and all activities will involve participation of the local communities in decision-making and supply of labour. A key component of the project will be training community personnel in identifying, planning, prioritizing and implementing rehabilitation activities in their respective areas. An important, albeit sensitive, dimension will include activities to promote the involvement of women as both participants in mainstream activities and as beneficiaries. Environmental assessment will be included in the formulation, implementation and review of project activities.

By the end of the project, in August 1993, a number of rural irrigation systems will have been rehabilitated, enabling villagers to grow more food. The supply of agricultural water will have been increased by the construction of off-takes and weirs and by cleaning canals and irrigation ditches. Village water and sanitation facilities will have been improved through the construction of wells, storage tanks and pit latrines. In addition, handpumps and piping will have been installed, and hygiene training given. A significant number of Afghans will have been trained in technical fields such as the repair of water systems and maintenance of rural sanitation. Project implementation will depend on reliable communications and technical implementing, monitoring and evaluation personnel; and provision has been made for requisite maintenance and repair facilities and procurement of spare parts.

Inputs

UNDP will provide 756 work-months of operational and technical personnel; subcontracts to implementing partners with the level of funding going to each sector and depending on needs identified by communities technically assessed by project personnel; in-service training; hand tools and equipment, plus materials when not available; and miscellaneous costs.

The communities will supply labour and locally available building materials such as stone, sand and timber.

Financial data

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Personnel	1 737 100
Subcontract	4 119 900
Training	100 000
Equipment	148 500
Miscellaneous	196 500
Total	6 302 000